Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior listings, and versions, of claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of <u>altering a digital music file in order to prevent</u> ~~preventing~~ reduction of sales amount of records due to a digital music file illegally distributed through a computer communication network, comprising the steps of:

  a) producing an advertising digital music file by performing one of either deteriorating or damaging a sound quality of an original music file of a cooperating record corporation; and

  b) distributing the advertising digital music file through the computer communication network.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step a) the advertising digital music file is generated by inserting <u>a</u> noise component <u>including</u> ~~such as~~ a voice of a singer or performer in the original music file, thereby damaging the sound quality.

3.   (Original)   The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step a) the advertising digital music file is generated by lowering a sampling rate of the digital music file to below that of the original music file, thereby deteriorating the sound quality.

4.   (Previously Presented)   The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step a) the advertising digital music file is generated by distorting the waveform of the original music, thereby damaging the sound quality.

5.   (Original)   The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step a) the advertising digital music file is generated by converting a multi-channel sound of the original music to a single-channel sound, thereby deteriorating the sound quality.

6-10.   (Canceled)

11.   (New) A method of altering a digital music file comprising:

producing an advertising digital music file by converting a multi-channel sound of an original music file to a single-channel sound, thereby deteriorating the sound quality of the original music file; and

distributing the advertising digital music file through a computer communication network.

12.   (New) A method of altering a digital music file comprising:

producing an advertising digital music file by inserting a noise component into an original music file, thereby deteriorating the sound quality of the original music file; and

distributing the advertising digital music file through a computer communication network.

13.   (New) The method of claim 13, wherein inserting a noise component comprises inserting a voice of a performer into the original music file.